

IN THE CLAIMS:

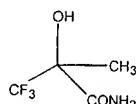
Please amend claim 35 as follows:

35. (Amended) The process of claim 30 wherein the microorganism is selected from the group consisting of the species *Klebsiella oxytoca* PRS1 (DSM 11009), *Klebsiella oxytoca* PRS1K17 (DSM 11623), *Klebsiella planticula* ID-624 (DSM 11354), and *Klebsiella pneumoniae* ID-625 (DSM 11355).

Please cancel claim 39.

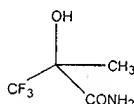
Please amend claims 41-44 as follows:

41. (Amended) A biologically pure culture of a microorganism wherein said microorganism utilizes propionamide of the formula:



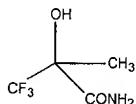
in the form of the racemate or of its optically active isomers as the sole nitrogen source; and wherein said microorganism is selected from the group consisting of the genus *Arthrobacter*, *Bacillus*, *Klebsiella* and *Pseudomonas*.

42. (amended) A biologically pure culture of a microorganism wherein said microorganism utilizes propionamide of the formula:



in the form of the racemate or of its optically active isomers as the sole nitrogen source; and wherein said microorganism is selected from the group consisting of the species *Klebsiella oxytoca PRS1* (DSM 11009), *Klebsiella oxytoca PRS1K17* (DSM 11623), *Arthrobacter ramosus ID-620* (DSM 11350), *Bacillus sp. ID-621* (DSM 11351), *Klebsiella planticula ID-624* (DSM 11354), *Klebsiella pneumoniae ID-625* (DSM 11355) and *Pseudomonas sp.* (DSM 11010).

43. (amended) A cell extract derived from a biologically pure culture of a microorganism wherein said microorganism utilizes propionamide of the formula:



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in the form of the racemate or of its optically active isomers as the sole nitrogen source; and wherein said microorganism is selected from the group consisting of the genus *Arthrobacter*, *Bacillus*, *Klebsiella* and *Pseudomonas*.